



584457

WARREN

U.S. EPA steps in to clean up plant

■ Officials are working to ensure that residents are safe and contamination is contained, the mayor said.

By AMANDA C. DAVIS
VINDICATOR TRUMBULL STAFF

WARREN — In coming weeks, residents can expect to see environmental workers in protective clothing, helping to remove materials contaminated with high levels of PCBs from the Mahoningside Power Plant site on Summit Street.

Mayor Hank Angelo said today that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has stepped in to take over cleanup and related costs at the site, which is near Mahoning Avenue Northwest.

The EPA will use approximately \$1 million in federal Superfund money to pay for cleanup although the site is not being considered a Superfund area, Angelo said.

Location: The plant, which was on a 5-acre site on the west bank of the Mahoning River, was leveled in March 1999 after sitting vacant for many years.

It is contaminated with asbestos, cancer-causing PCBs and heavy metals, including mercury, officials have said.

The groundwater table near the site is being treated with help from

CLEANUP EFFORTS

Mahoningside Power Plant

The U.S. EPA, with help from the Ohio EPA, will take over cleanup and related costs for the Mahoningside Power Plant site on Summit Street in Warren. The plant stood vacant for many years along the west bank of the Mahoning River and was razed in March 1999. Problems found on the site include:

Asbestos: Located in a building on the site, where asbestos-insulated materials were

found; subsurface traces were also detected.

PCBs: Found in the soil on the grounds; a high concentration was also detected in the basement of a boiler house.

Heavy metals: Detected in soil on the grounds; subsurface traces were also found near a basement on the premises.

Source: Project engineers

the city, the mayor said, so contamination cannot leave the site or get into the Mahoning River, Angelo said.

"We don't suspect it [contamination] has migrated from the site," he added.

The city is helping the EPA by providing in-kind services, such as the use of a city-owned video camera to film work being done and help with groundwater treatment, Angelo said.

Funding: The mayor in July asked for EPA assistance with cleanup after the city spent \$2.3 million in private funds, state grants, loans and Community Development Block Grants for the work. Included in that figure are several low-interest loans for the project, \$250,000 from Ohio Edison

and a \$200,000 federal grant for cleanup of brownfield sites. Warren also received a \$1.5 million Ohio Water Pollution Control loan. The city did not use general fund money for cleanup, the mayor said.

In January, engineering officials told city council that underground structures thought to have been removed years ago were found during excavation.

Subsurface asbestos, PCBs and heavy metals were also detected near the basement, officials said at that time.

State and federal regulations allow the underground structure to be encapsulated — an option consultants told council is more practical and cost-effective than completely removing subsurface contaminants.

YOUNGSTOWN VINDICATOR

10-18-00

1 of 1